



G. L. Pothier Enterprises Inc.  
2197 Galloway Drive  
Oakville, Ontario, Canada L6H 5M1

tel: (905) 844-5174  
fax: (905) 844-7368  
em: glenn@gfpi.com

Meeting notes from:

---

**The Second Meeting of the  
Detroit River International Crossing  
*Community Consultation Group***

---

Meeting Date/Location:

June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005/Holiday Inn Select Windsor, Ontario

Facilitator: Glenn Pothier, President, GLPi

## **Meeting Purpose**

The key focus of this second meeting of the Community Consultation Group (CCG) was to explore and discuss the Illustrative Alternatives Evaluation process with a view to maximizing the clarity, usability and value of the proposed rating tool. In addition, the meeting was designed to:

- Provide project status updates.
- Share information — including key issues and considerations — about plazas and crossing types and the implications of such for future planning.
- Provide an overview of the purpose and logistics of the upcoming Public Information Open Houses.
- Confirm the upcoming CCG meeting schedule and content focus.
- Allow for public/CCG member comments and questions about issues of their choosing.

## **Summary of Meeting Highlights**

### ***Introduction and Agenda Review***

- Glenn Pothier, the independent meeting facilitator, called the group to order, welcomed all participants, introduced project team members and provided an overview of the meeting agenda. He also offered to meet individually with those attending the CCG meeting for the first time to review general operating procedures and guiding principles.
- Dave Wake (Windsor Projects Coordinator, Ontario Ministry of Transportation) provided a brief welcome and message of thanks to all participants.
- Mohammed Alghurabi (Michigan Department of Transportation) expressed gratitude for being invited to the meeting and offered to share ideas and perspective with CCG members.

### ***Public and CCG Member Comment***

- Glenn Pothier reminded the group that in the interest of openness, transparency and accountability, any member of the public can attend a CCG meeting as an observer. He then asked if any members of the public were in attendance and, if so, whether any comments/questions were forthcoming at this time. There were no comments/questions.

Glenn Pothier then invited CCG members with any comments or questions to share them with the group as a whole. The following points were raised:

- A participant asked whether CCG meeting summaries could more fully document comments and questions raised by participants and any responses/answers from project team members (similar to what is understood to be the approach used for the U.S. LAC meetings). It was agreed that future meeting summaries would attempt to better capture the essence of comments, questions and responses.
- A participant raised the issue of whether the LAC is a ‘different type’ of group compared to the CCG. In response, Mohammed Alghurabi and Roger Ward said that the LAC and CCG have a shared purpose and many similarities, though they were constituted somewhat differently (that is, the U.S. team worked through elected officials and known stakeholders/community groups to invite LAC members; the Canadian team put out an open invitation through the media and so forth to invite participants). Both the LAC and CCG are intended to have broad representation and the ability to comment on the affected communities and interests within the study area.
- A participant asked for more opportunities within the CCG meeting forum for members to make comments and ask questions. The facilitator responded that it always has been the intent of the CCG to allow for ample opportunities in this regard and that this would continue to be the case.
- A participant also requested that future public meetings in Canada go beyond the drop-in format and also allow for a more formal comment and question/answer component. This suggestion was accepted for consideration.

### ***Review of May 11th CCG Meeting Notes***

- Glenn Pothier first confirmed that all in attendance had received a copy of the May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting notes before briefly reminding the group of the purpose of the first meeting and then asking for feedback regarding any substantive errors or omissions.
- No errors were noted. Notwithstanding the points referenced earlier that were made in the public/CCG member comment part of the meeting, there were no concerns about the meeting summary notes format and substance.

A participant asked for information on how the CCG will serve as more than a focus group. In response, the facilitator referenced the slides and other meeting notes from the first session. More specifically, the CCG meetings are intended to be a forum for two-way dialogue — for participants to both get information from the project team and to share their perspective and insight with the broader group. The meetings will allow for the surfacing and exploration of community issues.

### *Presentation on Plazas*

- Len Kozachuk (Deputy Project Manager, URS Canada) provided an overview presentation on plazas (please see slides 5-7 of the attached presentation) — covering the conceptual layout of plazas, the potential size of their footprint, design guidelines/requirements, and a variety of other factors that need to be considered. He also touched on some of the implications of the above as the project goes forward (for example, the technical requirement of the Canadian Border Service Agency (CBSA) that any new plaza be 80-100 acres in size to meet new plaza standards; the need to consider adjacent land uses when choosing a plaza site given that plazas generate noise impacts, require substantial lighting, and must be self-contained/secure).
- The presentation was followed by a series of questions and comments:

*Question:* Has the application of technology been considered?

*Answer:* Yes, technology has been considered in development of the CBSA requirements, but there must be the flexibility to address current and anticipated needs for these sites.

*Question:* How far inland is the foot of the bridge (is the grade on the bridge about 5%)?

*Answer:* Based on a required clearance of 150 feet and a grade of 3%, a new structure would extend inland about 1.5 KM. However, it is possible that the approach could be ‘looped back’ somewhat to reduce this distance.

*Question:* Has reverse processing been considered?

*Answer:* Yes, but neither the CBSA nor U.S. Customs are willing to give up on having a plaza on each side of the River. Joint processing (which would require 200 acres in one country or the other) is not being considered in planning for the plaza facilities.

*Question:* Is there a bridge plaza of this size in use today?

*Answer:* There is no plaza of this size (80 to 100 acres) currently in Windsor. The existing Canadian plaza at the Blue Water Bridge is being expanded to 90-acres; the U.S. is planning a new plaza located away from the border that is 150 acres in size. Existing plaza locations were not planned or designed based on current needs. Given security issues, CBSA prefers to avoid remote plaza sites connected by long corridor roads leading from crossing points to plazas.

### *Presentation of Initial Findings on Crossing Types*

- Murray Thompson (Project Manager, URS Canada) provided an overview presentation on crossing types, both bridge and tunnel (please see slides 8-13 of the attached presentation) — covering differing crossing widths of the Detroit River at different geographic points, data regarding shipping channel width/height, various bridge types (suspension, cable stay, arch), various tunnel types/approaches (hard rock tunnel boring, soft ground bored tunneling, submerged tunnels), soil/rock conditions along the River, and the importance of mining operations/methods both current and past in the River area. He also touched on some of the implications of the above as the project goes forward.
- More specifically, Mr. Thompson said that ground and soil condition data has been collected from known published sources. Soil conditions vary from South to East along the river with rock tunneling being studied in the Southern section of the study area and soft soils tunneling being studied in the Eastern section. However, there are a number of issues to consider:
  - Rock tunneling would require the use of large, special tunnel boring machines;
  - Voids/cracks in the rock formation in certain locations present challenges; and
  - The potential for noxious gas and water infiltration issues associated with poor rock conditions in the Southern portion of the study area make tunneling extremely difficult, if not impossible (in the portion of the River North of Zug Island, soft ground tunneling is feasible).
- A submerged tunnel has also been considered. This would require cutting a trench into the bottom of the River below the navigational depth and the placement of pre-cast tunnel sections. This technique would disturb contaminated sediments along the river's edges. This technique may also displace sensitive environmental areas at the Detroit River shoreline. In order to connect the submerged tunnel section under the River to the access approaches a fairly deep trench would have to be constructed inland from the river's edge.
- There are a large number of historical and active salt mines and solution mines along the River. The study team is aware of the location of many of these sites. However, there are also unknown brine wells in the area. Locating a footing for a bridge or constructing a tunnel in the area of the salt mines is a concern. The team will be conducting more geotechnical work in these areas regarding subsurface conditions.

- The presentation was followed by a series of questions and comments:

*Question:* How were the existing Detroit River tunnels built?

*Answer:* Using the submerged tunnel method — in the early part of the 1900's when environmental controls were less stringent.

*Question:* Given concerns about the wells and salt mines, are there possible locations in that area of the River for a new crossing?

*Answer:* Yes, there are still areas that can be considered in this part of the River and the additional geotechnical information will help confirm where they exist.

*Question:* What is the basis for the proposed cross-section?

*Answer:* Traffic projections indicate a 6-lane crossing is required. Tunnel boring machines can be used to create a tunnel that accommodates two lanes (typically) or three lanes (specialized). Two or three tunnels will be required to provide the necessary number of lanes under the River.

*Question:* Why is rock tunneling more complicated than in clay?

*Answer:* We will get the information on this question and report back to the CCG. *(URS Canada offers the following information:*

*- For this project, tunneling through both rock and clay will require construction with a tunnel boring machine to protect the workers and limit the ingress of soil, rock, water and any underground gasses into the tunnel during construction.*

*- Tunneling through the rock may take longer than tunneling through clay but the speed of excavation depends on many project-specific factors that have not been fully defined at this time.*

*- The cost of tunnel boring machines as might be suitable for this project should be within the same order of magnitude for either tunneling through clay or rock; some of the cutting tools and materials processing equipment would differ.*

*- Depending on the location, the excavation required to get down to tunnel level may be more or less complicated for either soil or rock; the project is insufficiently defined at this time to comparatively judge the 'complexity' of approach construction)*

*Question:* What would be the cost of a tunnel?

*Answer:* No estimates are available at this time.

*Question:* How was the 'big dig' in Boston completed?

*Answer:* Using a variety of technologies and excavation techniques suitable to the soil conditions, depths and design of that project.

### ***Review of Illustrative Alternatives Evaluation Process***

- Len Kozachuk provided an overview of the illustrative alternatives evaluation process (including key steps and the proposed evaluation methods) and explained each section of the draft rating tool (its purpose, factors, weighting considerations and so forth) — please see slides 14-17. The approach to evaluation of alternatives that will be presented to the public will involve the use of both reasoned argument and arithmetic (weighting and scoring) methodologies.
- More specifically, Mr. Kozachuk emphasized that the evaluation is a bi-national end-to-end effort and that the process used to identify alternatives to date has followed these steps:
  - Data collection regarding significant study area features.
  - Identification of possible plaza sites using guiding principles developed in conjunction with CBSA.
  - Development of possible crossing types and locations in consultation with the US team.
  - Route generation using guiding principles and objectives identified in the approved Terms of Reference (including the potential utilization of existing infrastructure).

The next step is to review of the full set of possible alternatives and the evaluation of them to determine those that are most practical.
- Following the presentation, CCG members were invited to share their ideas on how best to maximize the clarity, usability and value of the rating tool — including ideas for refinements, additions, deletions and so forth. The following suggestions and/or questions were offered:

*Question:* Is the rating tool unique?

*Answer:* While this rating tool has been used on other projects by others, URS Canada has not used this particular tool for the public meeting exercise of an environmental assessment (URS has used other tools for this purpose). This rating tool was developed specifically for this initiative to assist the project team to *understand* the public's issues and concerns for this project. The tool will be posted on the project website and be made available at the upcoming PIOHs.

*Comment:* The tool contains too much 'front-end material' — it is a lot to get through before reaching the page that asks for the perceived importance of each of the factors. It would be useful if people brought the completed tool to the upcoming meeting.

*Comment:* The project team should consider reordering the section layout of the rating tool: begin with the introduction, followed by the factor rating scale page, then close with the table and more detailed factor descriptions.

*Comment:* The natural environment component should address the connection between natural environmental elements and air quality.

*Comment:* The rating tool should have a cut off date by which it must be submitted.

*Comment:* The technical language and acronyms should be eliminated/reduced or made more understandable.

*Question:* How would air quality in a tunnel be addressed?

*Answer:* Air would be exhausted through a system of fans with appropriate filtering devices and vent shafts.

*Question:* What drives the final decision once weightings have been determined?

*Answer:* There is no single element that drives decisions — all inputs will be taken as guidance.

*Question:* Shouldn't the evaluation be driven by the need to measure against the overall goals and objectives of the project — and, therefore, that factor weights should depend on the objective of the crossing?

*Answer:* The undertaking does have a clearly established purpose — participants were referred to the Introduction section of the rating tool piece — and this will guide all *decision-making*.

*Comment:* The scale-marker should be larger.

*Comment:* The numbers for the scale should be moved from the left to the right side of the line.

*Question:* How will spin-off effects from the plaza/crossing be handled?

*Answer:* The changes are beyond the control of the project and are driven by other factors/*decision-making* processes.

*Comment:* The new crossing is an opportunity for the City — addressing anticipated needs is critical to ensuring successful growth for the region.

*Question:* When will the public have an opportunity to see the governance plan for the crossing (i.e. whether the facility will be publicly or privately owned)?

*Answer:* This is being looked at separately.

*Comment* [received by e-mail from a CCG member unable to attend the meeting — in paraphrased form]: Following the June PIOH's, the public will likely want to focus on the 'pros and cons' of the crossing/route alternatives — they will be less interested in "connecting the dots on a mysterious form that appears to have little direct relationship to one route or another."

*Question* [received by e-mail from a CCG member unable to attend the meeting]: Exactly how will the results obtained from the rating tool be compiled and what weight will the information collected be given in decision-making? In other words, is this a scientific tool that will lend something to the process, or is it a 'feel good' exercise to convince the public that their opinion matters?

*Note:* Some participants praised the draft rating tool and said they basically thought it worked fine as is.

- Additional feedback on the rating tool will be accepted up to and including June 15/05.

### ***Overview of Upcoming Meetings***

- The next CCG meeting date is tentatively scheduled for July 13/05 (*URS Canada has confirmed the meeting date of Wednesday, July 13/05, 6:30 to 8:30pm*). The agenda is yet to be determined, but will likely include exploration of issues flowing from the June Windsor-area Public Information Open Houses (scheduled for June 21, 22, and 28). Len Kozachuk provided an overview of the purpose of the Open Houses and provided logistical information (please see slides 18-19).
- The venue for the next CCG meeting is yet to be determined. (*URS Canada has confirmed the venue for the next meeting as follows: St. Clair Saints Hall, Holiday Inn Select, 1855 Huron Church Road, Windsor*)

### ***Other Business and Open Forum***

- Len Kozachuk provided a presentation in response to an issue raised by a CCG member concerning a newspaper article stating that the Ambassador Bridge will reach capacity later than predicted (see slides 20-24). Mr. Kozachuk reinforced that this project is looking at long-term needs and other factors including the potential for service disruption and the attendant associated risks.

- The presentation was followed by a series of questions and comments, including those prompted by the facilitator as any ‘other business’ or issues that CCG members/the public would like to raise:

*Question:* What is the impact of some U.S. municipalities passing motions stating they do not want the crossing located in their area?

*Answer:* Mohammed Alghurabi indicated that such motions have been received, but given the legislative requirements that the project is proceeding under they are considered advisory only.

*Question:* Has the ferry been considered under the auspices of the study?

*Answer:* Yes, the ferry has been considered. However, it alone is not a solution to the problem (though it may be part of the solution).

*Comment:* Whatever solution is chosen, it must meet the purpose of the study as defined. There is great potential for benefits and spin-offs from the initiative. If we don’t make the decision someone will come along and make it for us. We need a clear vision for the future.

*Comment:* Air quality is vitally important. We can’t just be thinking about truck routes. We must think of air quality and its relationship to health and the area’s broader ecological system.

### ***Closing Remarks***

- Glenn Pothier and Dave Wake thanked the group for their attendance and participation.
- The meeting was formally adjourned (having run from approximately 6:35 to 9:15p.m.).

**Attendance (names listed in no particular order)**

***CCG Members:***

Mike Duchene — Citizens in Support of DRTP  
Moe Haas — Citizens in Support of DRTP  
Tedd Szalay  
Chad Fenech  
Jeff O'Brien  
Terrence Kennedy — WWCTWC  
Mary Ann Cuderman — WWCTWC  
Robert J. Benson  
Ray Bezaire — Concerned Citizen West Side  
Dominic Troiani  
Alice DiCaro — Ojibway Now!  
Ed Arditti — Ojibway Now!  
Ed Oleksiuk — Ojibway Now!  
Dennis Boismier  
Earle J. Dunham  
David Munro — Little River Enhancement Group  
David Baker — Save Ojibway  
Jayne Lessard  
Alan McKinnon — CPOW  
Ian Naisbitt — Little River Enhancement Group  
Derek Coronado — CEA  
Rob Spring — CEA & Green Party of Canada  
Nancy Pancheshan — FOOP  
Pat Morneau  
Paul Morneau  
Liz Morneau  
Carmella Micallef  
Gary Parent — WDLC  
Dan Karon  
Anna Lynn Meloche — WWCTWC; CPOW

***Partnership:***

Tim Morin — TC  
Dave Wake — MTO  
Roger Ward — MTO  
Joel Foster — MTO  
Mohammed Alghurabi — MDOT  
Roger Ward — MTO

***Consultant Team:***

Audrey Steele — LGL Limited  
Len Kozachuk — URS Canada  
Murray Thompson — URS Canada